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<i>Commodities</i>	GENERAL IMPORTS		
	<i>Annual Average 1910-1913</i>	<i>Total 1916</i>	<i>From United States 1916</i>
Oats	180	96	49
Malt	54	19	12
Rye	19	1	1
Flour	45	4	..
Macaroni paste	23	..	..
Potatoes	95	78	..
Fresh vegetables	56	25	..
Beans and peas	8	4	..
Eggs	14	3	..
Butter	5	..	..
Poultry	5	2	..
Fresh meat	13	1	..
Preserved meat	3	1	1
Hay	51	1	..
Bran	13	4	4
Flour for cattle	53	..	..
Rupe cakes and carob bean	32	27	..
Petroleum	65	34	12
<i>(in thousands of head)</i>			
Bovine cattle	86	3	..
Swine	65	37	..
Sheep	116	1	..

## THE CASE FOR HOLLAND

BY A. G. A. VAN EELDE,

Member of the Netherlands Mission to the United States.

On July 31, 1914, Holland began mobilizing its army and navy, subsequently set to increasing and equipping them, and now maintains on a war footing about half a million of men. It acted thus, not with a view to join the cause of either of the belligerents, but to be in a position to ward off any hostile attempt on the integrity of its territory, home and abroad. It publicly declared its firm determination to remain neutral.

The number of those criticizing this line of conduct was of no consequence in Holland, but rather extensive abroad. It was, the latter averred, inconsistent with the policy of Holland as chronicled in history and not conformable to the spirit of the nation, which

was well known to be liberty-loving and anti-militaristic. Before long, however, the dissenting voices became faint and less numerous. The opinion began to prevail that intervention of Holland in the war could only be done at a ruinous cost to itself, would be of no material advantage to anybody and unlikely to promote justice, until, at the present moment, all open-minded critics admit the wisdom of Holland's decision to stand aloof, showing a bold face on all sides; on the one hand ready to severely punish all comers who were evilly affected, on the other to extend its alleviating hands to the sufferers of all nations.

Those, however, who think that Holland, acting as it does, has a chance of coming off with a whole skin, are under a misapprehension. What with the upkeep of an abnormally sized army, the housing and boarding of thousands and thousands of interned soldiers and refugees, what with the government distribution of foodstuffs and other commodities to its population at prices far below the absurdly enhanced cost prices, Holland is compelled to raise loans and taxes of unprecedented magnitude.

The ever increasing difficulties and dangers at sea seriously threaten its mercantile and fishing fleets. For, were it not for the undaunted determination of its sailors and fishermen who never flinch no matter what perils are impending over them, the supplies of indispensable victuals would have run out long since. As it is, supplies are scanty. All Holland is clamoring for more bread and fuel, farmers are crying out for fertilizers, stock owners for feeding stuffs, manufacturers for coal and raw materials. For Holland is not a self-supporting country in the actual sense of the word.

Formerly, when means of conveyance were limited to the efforts of human and animal physical power, Holland derived its necessities of life mainly from its own soil. On the victorious entrance, however, of the steam engine, transport—especially marine transport—became swift, cheap and reliable. The Dutch farmer realized that cereals could be grown in America and landed in his own country at less cost than he could raise them at home; he stopped tilling the soil, promptly turned his arable lands into grasslands and applied himself to cattle raising, his efforts resulting in the creation of a cattle breed, justly renowned all the world over—not the least in the United States—for its milk producing qualities.

The manufacturer, in the meantime, kept pace with the farmer.

He left to others the providing of articles which could be landed more cheaply from elsewhere, and limited himself to the manufacture of such articles best adapted to the conditions of his country, importing his raw materials from abroad.

Thus it came to pass that Holland, like England and like England alone, became a free trading country, producing what it is best adapted to produce, depending for most of its cereals, fuel and raw materials on the available surplus production in other countries imported into Holland practically duty free.

Only one-fourth of the total amount of wheat and rye needed for bread for the population of Holland and the multitude of its guests, grows on Dutch soil. The balance used to be imported from the Baltic provinces, from the Black Sea provinces and from America. The two former sources being cut off immediately after war broke out, stocks of wheat and rye began to fall dangerously low in Holland in August and September of 1914, causing the government to step in and to establish an organization of its own for the purchase, the transportation and home distribution of said cereals. The government reckoning and—as subsequent events proved—not in vain, on the farmers of its old friend of long tried standing, the United States, was enabled to realize its designs, avert the threatening bread scare and to create a sense of security. Bread, howsoever, was procurable in diminished rations only.

The sense of security following upon this action of the government was not confined to Holland alone. It spread to Belgium and to the north of France. The American Commission for the Relief of Belgium in its untiring efforts to supply the needful to millions of indigent men, women and children—a gigantic self-constituted task—once in a while ran up against the vicissitudes of fate and found itself short of provisions. Self praise is no recommendation, but the Belgian Relief Commission will bear witness to the fact that, in such times of emergency, the Holland government was ever willing to open the doors of its storerooms, thereby releasing the anxiety of the Commission and its crowd of famine threatened clients. On those occasions the people of Holland, without exception, stood by its government.

Of late, however, things are shaping differently. The United States, hitherto a neutral, joined the belligerents and was compelled, so as to protect the interests of self and allies, to stop the

exportation of sundry commodities, among them cereals, pending the result of stock taking. Subsequently the sense of security in Holland, in Belgium and in the north of France is giving place to a feeling of unrest. What between the alarming news that no more grain-laden ships are to be expected in the ports of Holland within measurable time, and the prospect of the importation of the precious cereals being stopped altogether, once more the fear of an approaching bread scare is looming up in the minds of the people of Holland, of Belgium and of such portions of France as are occupied today by the Germans. Bread rations in Holland have been reduced from .88 of a pound to .56 of a pound per day.

The importation of fertilizers and feeding stuffs, although a matter of second consideration in comparison with wheat and rye, is of vital importance to Holland. Lack of fertilizers would preclude farmers and cattle breeders from turning their grasslands to account in summer, while want of feeding stuffs would render the upkeep of cattle in winter time well nigh an impossibility. Cessation of importation would therefore be almost on a par with a national calamity; it would involve the immediate slaughtering of roughly half a million cattle, half a million pigs and half a million sheep; it would put a stop to all exportation, to allies and centrals alike, involving dearth of fuel and raw industrial materials, which Holland is in the habit of exchanging against its surplus production. Deprived of the means for carrying on such interchange, in other words thrown exclusively on its own resources, Holland might be able to drag on its existence, but only at an excessive cost and risk. Nearly a million of its inhabitants, about one-seventh of its population, would have to walk the streets unemployed. Lately, rumors are afloat giving rise to the belief that the already materially reduced importation of fertilizers and feeding stuffs will be caused to stop altogether. Holland, realizing the far-reaching consequences of such a contingency, is anxiously watching coming events.

It is a duty incumbent on every nation to pass in review, from time to time, its conduct in the past; especially so, after a period of three years of warfare, now elapsed. Holland can set out for the performance of this duty with a clear conscience, fully confiding in the honesty of its purpose and the wisdom of its leaders chosen through the medium of its democratic institutions.

At the opening of the war it took up its stand as a neutral

power, a position criticized at first by some, later on admitted as being correct by all but a few. It has since acted up to its obligations, playing a fair and open game with everybody, honestly endeavoring to apply the same standard to all belligerents.

It has suffered, and is still suffering, but it strongly feels the unbecomingness of accentuating its own burdens while millions of fellowmen are sacrificing their all, and therefore Holland abstains from doing so. At the same time there must be no misunderstanding. If a man has a clear conscience, he has evidently a clear case, and is entitled to a respectful hearing and an impartial judgment.

The case for Holland is a clear one. She expects with confidence unbiased treatment.